



**MINUTES OF THE CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION held
Monday, December 21, 1998, for the purpose of meeting with Roosevelt Center merchants.**

The meeting began at 8:45 p.m. It was held in the Council Room of the Municipal Building .

PRESENT WERE: Council members Edward V.J. Putens, Rodney M. Roberts, Alan Turnbull Thomas X. White and Mayor Judith F. Davis.

STAFF PRESENT WERE: Michael P. McLaughlin, City Manager; David E. Moran, City Clerk James Craze, Police Chief and Heather Hartman, Crisis Intervention Counselor.

ALSO PRESENT WERE: Jim Cassels, Cindy Comproni, Bob Davis, Gwen Vaccarro, Beth Novak, Leonard Wallace, Jeanne Smith and Nick Mydra

Jeanne Smith, President of the Merchants Association, thanked City Council for meeting with the merchants. She noted that the merchants had met and had some primary issues to present to Council. Ms. Smith suggested that Council walk through the Center.

Council took a tour of the Center. Merchants expressed concern about the use of profanity, bicycling, lighting, skateboarding and other actions at the Center. There was discussion about what steps the city could take to enforce laws in the Center.

Ms. Smith reviewed a list of items that the merchants had made. She stressed that more police patrols were needed. Ms. Comproni stated that there were kids skipping school and some were dealing in drugs. Chief Craze agreed to have the School Resource Officer investigate this matter.

Ms. Smith expressed concern about the dispatchers response to calls and Mr. Leonard relayed a specific experience. Council encouraged merchants to report problems with the dispatchers to police supervisors. Chief Craze noted that this was an easy matter to investigate since all calls to dispatch are recorded.

Mr. Turnbull expressed support for foot patrols at the Center and other locations in the City.

Ms. Smith discussed signage at the Center and asked for additional signs at Southway & 193 and Crescent and 201. Mr. McLaughlin responded that the City wrote a letter to SHA and was still awaiting a response.

The merchants requested regular meetings with City Council. Council explained the stakeholders process. Ms. Smith noted that the group was organized and was trying to do more. Ms. Smith asked about the status of the community map. Mr. McLaughlin agreed to check on the map's status.

Ms. Smith asked about how to get the 30 minute parking on Centerway changed to an hour. Council believed the 30 minute parking was addressing a need. Mr. Leonard expressed concern about the size of the spaces at Roosevelt Center. He believed some of the spaces were below code.

The merchants expressed a desire to set up a business crime watch. Chief Craze agreed to put Brit Cave in contact with the merchants to set this up. Mr. Wallace relayed an incident where a woman was attacked at the playground. He noted that the problems at the Center were getting worse and believed that there was a roving gang of kids.

Mr. Roberts stated that there were millions of dollars invested in the Center. He believed there needed to be a police officer stationed full-time at the Center. Mayor Davis suggested that Mr. Roberts raise this issue at budget time. She stressed that Council has a responsibility to serve the entire city.

Mr. Putens indicated that there were only so many officers to go around. Ms. Smith reiterated that the merchants were not asking for 24 hour police protection, just more coverage.

Mr. Turnbull stated that specific problems had been raised such as: dispatcher response, enforcement of quality of life laws at the Center and code enforcement issues and hoped these would be addressed. Mr. White stated that Council has learned some things. He noted that the SRO's were going to address the skipping problem.

Mayor Davis thanked everyone for attending.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:05 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
David E. Moran, CMC
City Clerk